

REPORT OF THE SUSSEX POLICE AUTHORITY

The Sussex Police Authority met at County Hall, Lewes, on 15 April 2010

Attendances:

Dr L Bush (Chairman), Mr L Barnard, Prof G Bull, Ms E Daniel, Mr G Daniel, Mr P Evans, Mrs S Knight, Mr P Jones, Mr A Price JP, Mrs C Shaves MBE JP, Mr A Smith, Mr S Waight (Vice-Chairman) and Dr R Walker.

The Police Authority considered a wide range of policing issues at the meeting including the following matters. The full set of reports to the Police Authority can be accessed on the Authority's website

www.sussexpoliceauthority.gov.uk

1. Independent CCTV Monitoring

1.1 The Police Authority has led the way nationally by introducing an independent monitoring scheme for Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) usage by Sussex Police. The Authority is proud to be the first Police Authority in the country to introduce such a scheme.

1.2 The scheme resulted from an identified need to provide an effective independent oversight of the public place CCTV that is managed by Sussex Police. The introduction of this scheme reflects the concern expressed at community engagement events and through general comment from the public. The Authority, therefore, felt that it was in the public interest to address this via visibly independent assessment of CCTV usage. The efficient use of public space CCTV provides an invaluable tool to aid the investigation of crime. However, this must always be set against a proper respect and appreciation of the rights of individuals to a private life. Human Rights and Data Protection legislation forms the backbone of the current CCTV codes of practice, and all Sussex Police operators are trained to a high standard to abide by these principles. Nevertheless, it is important to have independent oversight of the system, and the new visitor scheme will greatly assist in ensuring compliance with those fundamental principles, and thereby increase public confidence.

1.3 The Authority has appointed 12 independent, fully trained and vetted volunteers to perform this important public scrutiny role. These volunteers will visit each Police CCTV Monitoring Centre in Sussex once a month to monitor the usage of over 400 council-owned cameras across the county. CCTV has proved to be a useful tool to deter and detect crime. However, if misused, it can have a negative impact on public confidence. The Authority felt that it was in the public interest to have an effective independent oversight of the CCTV that is managed by Sussex Police. In approving the Independent CCTV Monitoring Scheme the Authority is seeking to enhance public confidence in the Sussex Police CCTV system's integrity and transparency. The regular

external scrutiny of the system will help to ensure that the use of public place CCTV is more widely accepted.

2. Collaboration

2.1 The South East Region Collaboration Programme (SERCP) was established by the Police Authorities and Police Forces of Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and Thames Valley to identify ways of working more effectively together, as well as with other organisations, in order to achieve significant cost savings and improve performance, particularly in the areas of serious and organised crime. The impetus to work more effectively together through collaboration is being driven by:-

- the national economic position;
- the need to achieve greater value for money and opportunity to improve the performance of tackling serious and organised crime; and
- the need to enhance resilience and capability.

2.2 The Police Authority and Sussex Police have entered into collaborative agreements in respect of Witness Protection, Covert Operations and Technical Support. These areas were selected to improve the region's capability and form an integral part of the region's new model to tackle serious and organised crime and thereby secure confidence in building further collaborative ventures in the region. The next area being considered for collaboration is air support and the business case for this area of work is currently being considered. The Police Authority is also liaising closely with local authorities and other partner agencies in Sussex to explore opportunities for partnership working.

3. Road Safety

3.1 The recently published Audit Commission Thematic Review on Road Safety recognises that police authorities and forces need to work closely with the highways authorities, the Highways Agency, health services and Fire and Rescue services to achieve improved road safety. In Sussex there is good multi-agency working to improve road safety through improved analysis of data, targeting action on locations and people, engaging the public and achieving value for money.

3.2 The Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) promotes and delivers road safety. The SSRP brings together all the agencies and bodies identified in the Audit Commission Report. Community responsibility in monitoring road safety is key and there are a number of speedwatch sites across Sussex as well as community contracts entered into to maintain speed limits. Sussex Police initiated Operation Crackdown in 2007 in response to public feedback about tackling anti-social driving in Sussex. The Operation facilitates public reporting of anti-social driving via a website or phone line. A tiered intervention response addresses the anti-social driving proportionate to the risk posed and balances the need for either education or enforcement activity. Work is under way to improve user satisfaction levels by enhancing feedback

of outcomes, particularly improvements in the follow up or reporting. The Authority has endorsed the suggestion to more widely publicise the successes of Operation Crackdown to impact public confidence. Contact details regarding Operation Crackdown can be accessed through www.operationcrackdown.org.

3.3 The Authority has also endorsed the continuing work of the Sussex Police in delivering parts of the national intelligence data picture relating to killed and seriously injured and reaffirms its commitment to the SSRP as the key partnership in Sussex focused on casualty reduction. The Authority congratulated the SSRP on its work including the speed camera operations (static and mobile), schools work, engineering and enforcement schemes as well as a significant amount of education and publicity initiatives such as the 'Embrace Life' seat belt advert campaign, which although only recently launched had now spread worldwide via the web. This campaign has given the SSRP international recognition for an innovative and impactful piece of work which can still be viewed from our website.

4. Police Authority Website

4.1 The Authority has received a very positive reaction from the public in response to the relaunched Police Authority website which is based around the four core duties of police authorities: Setting Strategic Directions, Scrutinising Performance, Community Engagement and Securing Value for Money. The website is designed to interact directly with the public and the 'Engaging with you' pages allow members of the public to get in touch with the Authority, hear feedback and keep informed in a number of ways. The Authority is also using the website as a consultative tool and will be exploring the use of surveys and polls whilst providing access to survey results and appropriate feedback. The Authority is committed to making the best use of resources in this area of work and will be sighted on any partnership activity and opportunities throughout Sussex, to minimise duplication of effort and maximise public engagement with the work of the Authority and Sussex Police.

Dr Laurie Bush
Chairman

April 2010

